THE ALGONQUIAN SERIES

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THE ALGONQUIAN SERIES

Origin of the Name Manhattan

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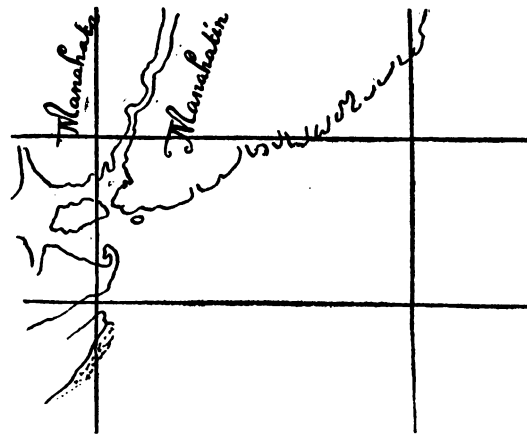

THE EARLIEST MAP OF MANHATTAN ISLAND

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THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME MANHATTAN

With Historical and Ethnological Notes

BY

WILLIAM WALLACE TOOKER

WITH MAP

NEW YORK

FRANCIS P. HARPER

1901

TO

HERBERT FOSTER GUNNISON

OF THE

BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE

WHOSE UNWAVERING INTEREST IN MY WORK

LED TO ITS CONTINUANCE

THESE ALGONQUIAN SERIES

ARE

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

INTRODUCTION.

THE advent of civilization in the seventeenth century found that portion of our country, from which these studies in nomenclature have been derived, inhabited by various tribes of the great Algonquian * family †—a family whose territorial

* *Algonquian;* contracted from *Algomequin*, an Algonkin word, signifying "Those on the other side of the river," *i. e.*, St. Lawrence.—Trumbull.

† "There are many linguistic families in North America [58], and in a number of

possessions were greater and whose descendants are to-day far more numerous than that of any other North American linguistic stock.* There is great probability, from evidence

these there are many tribes speaking diverse languages. It is important, therefore, that some form should be given to the family name by which it may be distinguished from the name of a single tribe or language. In many cases some one language, rather than a stock, has been taken as the type and its name given to the entire family; so that the use of a language and that of the stock are identical. This is inconvenient and leads to confusion. For such reason it has been decided to give each family name the termination in 'an' or 'ian.'"—J. W. Powell, Seventh Ann. Report Bureau of Ethnology.

*Their numbers now approximate one hundred thousand, of whom a little more than sixth-tenths reside in Canada.

gradually accumulating, that the builders of the famous earthworks and mounds of the Ohio valley, and of other mounds in localities trending to the northwest as far as the prairies of Wisconsin, were people of the same stock. If this possibility proves on further research to be an assured fact, it should be an additional reason for studying all minutiæ relating to this justly celebrated family.

The various clans of these people speak to us to-day in appellations which they bestowed upon mountains, lakes, rivers, headlands, and other natural features of our land, extending from the snow-clad peaks of the Rockies, in the far northwest,

to the icy cliffs of bleak Labrador on the east, and stretching southward as far as the fragrant pines of the balmy Carolinas. These names are abundantly strewn over the whole of this vast area. A few clusters from this vineyard have been garnered here and there for the purposes of study, but as yet the harvest awaits the gleaner. Their analysis will bring light to bear on many intricate problems, unravel the myths of tradition, add to our knowledge of the early history of many localities, and give us an insight into the psychology of the aboriginal mind often unobtainable in any other way.

The attention of many societies, historical and scientific, is being daily called to the question of our Amerindian names.* Their significations are being daily sought after by the historian, by the student, by the lawmaker, and by the summer-cottager, each for varying intents. Furthermore, the ancient Indian names of localities are being resur-

* "*Amerind, Ameridian, Amerindic*, an arbitrary compound of the leading syllables of the frequently used phrase 'American Indian,' now adopted by the Bureau of Ethnology, to designate the native American tribes" (American Anthropologist, N. S., vol. i. p. 502). The publisher of this series thought best not to use this compound as, not being generally known or adopted, it might create some confusion.

rected from their hidden folds in the quaint and faded script of the past, where they have laid neglected for generation after generation, and are once again bestowed where they originated centuries ago.

Therefore, as will be observed, it is not merely the desire to satisfy a brief curiosity that impels us to the consideration of the real meaning and true origin of these significant terms, but a far more desirable and enlightened aim; although curiosity, as the embryo of active intelligence, investigation, and thought, sometimes leads to unexpected results in all channels of scientific exploration.

As our late distinguished ethnolo-

gist, Dr. Daniel G. Brinton, once remarked:* "Certainly it would be a most legitimate anxiety which should direct itself to the preservation of the correct form and precise meaning of these names as peculiarly national designations. One would think that this alone would not fail to excite something more than a languid curiosity in American linguistics, at least in our institutions of learning and societies for historical research."

With these aims in view, the present series of Algonquian studies have been assembled, revised, and with additional notes are submitted, as a

* Essays of an Americanist, p. 309.

slight addition to the synonyms of the Algonquian family and bibliography of American history.

WM. WALLACE TOOKER.

SAG HARBOR, N. Y.,
August 1, 1900.

THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME MANHATTAN.*

IT seems quite apropos at the present time, now the Greater New York has become an assured certainty, and as the term *Manhattan* has been chosen

* This essay was read before Section H (Anthropology), American Association for the Advancement of Science, at Buffalo, in 1896, by Prof. W. J. McGee, of the Bureau of Ethnology, in the absence of the author, and printed in the Brooklyn Eagle Almanac for 1897. It has been revised and enlarged.

to designate the first and principal borough of this great civic consolidation, that a full connotation of the name should be presented, especially as it has been occasionally applied to the lesser New York, and is now the title of many of its corporations; and, furthermore, at an early period was by the Dutch claimed to describe the whole province. In proof of this last assumption, the following appears in Heermann's Journal of the Dutch Embassy to Maryland in the year 1659.* "And hereabouts we gave him to understand that *Manhattans*, signified the whole country, having pre-

* Col. Hist. N. Y., vol. ii. p. 92.

served the ancient name of the Indian nations among whom the Dutch first settled." This quotation bears witness that the Dutch made use of the term identically the same as the English did the names *Massachusetts* and *Connecticut*, without any consideration whatever for its limited topographical application as understood by those who bestowed it, and thus by adoption it became—in the words of an eminent ethnologist†—a mere distinguishing mark, destitute of its original self-interpreting faculty which it possessed in its own language.

* Trumbull, Names in Connecticut, Introduction, p. iii.

So many problems—geographical, historical, and anthropological—enter into the discussion as to its origin and meaning that a complete collation of contributing data bearing upon these points would necessarily carry the subject to a much greater length than the limits of the present paper would warrant, or its title might seem to indicate.

Moreover, the fact appears, whether designating an island, people, or province, the name is so interwoven into the history of the Dutch settlement of New York, that it is impossible to consider the derivation of the first without adverting in a greater degree to the latter.

Again, as some of the questions involved require careful examination of the early maps and an accurate study of their relation to the date of settlement, also a critical scrutiny of those which may be cartographical perversions, and therefore untrustworthy as an authority, it behooves us to be very cautious in accepting conclusions based upon a source that more than possibly had a motive for distorting facts.

Not only is the origin of the name so encompassed, but the derivations offered for it in later times are so numerous and so doubtful that it would seem almost superfluous to add another to the already long list

unless something convincing can be offered in its favor, for I know of no name of aboriginal bestowal that has had more conjectural significations and derivations assigned to it than this same simple name, Manhattan.

Many prominent ethnologists and historians have had a part in suggesting these derivations, and their opinions will be carefully noted and considered, as far as possible in their chronological order. Therefore, it is not only the derivation and etymology of the name that is to be considered, but also so much of its subsequent history as is necessary to trace its evolution from its primi-

tive tongue into the alien Dutch and English, where it has been a part for the greater portion of three centuries. The early documents or records, so far as my research has extended, fail to give a clew to a possible meaning, but, with the maps, render considerable aid to the investigator, by means of which a correct insight may be acquired as to the first application of the name.

Rev. John Heckewelder, the well-known Moravian missionary, who devoted the greater part of his life to Christianizing the Delaware Indians in Pennsylvania and Ohio, was the first to offer an etymology for the name. In his History, Man-

ners, and Customs of the Indian Nations, etc., 1817,* he speaks of "The current account given by the Delawares and Mohegans of the scenes which took place when they were first made to taste spirituous liquors by the Dutch who landed on New York Island. . . They called it *Manahachtanienk*, which in the Delaware language, means 'the island where we all became intoxicated.' We have corrupted this name into Manhattan, but not so as to destroy its meaning or conceal its origin. The last syllable which we have left out is only a termination implying

* Memoirs Hist. Soc. of Pa., vol. xii. p. 262.

locality, and in this word signifies as much as 'where we.' There are few Indian traditions so well supported as this." Heckewelder qualifies this later, as quoted by George Folsom in the Collections of the New York Historical Society * by saying "The Delawares call this place (New York Island) *Mannahattanink*, or *Mannahachtanink*, to this day. They have frequently told me that it derived its name from this general intoxication, and that the word comprehended the same as to say 'The island or place of general intoxication.' The *Mahicanni* (otherwise called *Mohig-*

* New series, vol. i. p. 73.

gans by the English, and *Mahicanders* by the Low Dutch) call this place by the same name as the Delawares do: yet think it is owing or given in consequence of a kind of wood which grew there, and of which the Indians used to make their bows and arrows. This word the latter (*Mohicanni*) call '*gawaak.*'"

Rev. A. S. Anthony, a native Delaware Indian, residing in Canada, a few years since gave the Mohegan derivation to the late Dr. D. G. Brinton,* who says: "The name for the compound instrument, 'bow and arrow,' is *Manhtaht*, the first 'a' being nasal, and from this word,

* Essays of an Americanist, p. 183.

Mr. Anthony states, is derived the name *Manhattan*, properly *Manahahtank*, 'the place where they gather wood to make bows.'"

The fact that individuals of two cognate tribes, using precisely the same pronunciation, derive the word differently is enough in itself to throw a decided doubt on both derivations. The Delaware etymology proves that an Indian cannot always be depended upon for the truth of his ancestral traditions, nor for the correctness of his own interpretations of what we may call archaic terms. Both the tradition and interpretation in this instance are entirely supposititious, for the

reason that the name designated the locality long before the Dutch had begun a settlement or had even landed upon the island; and, so far as drunkenness is concerned, Van der Donck wrote in 1656,* "In the Indian languages, which are rich and expressive, they have no word to express drunkenness. Drunken men they call fools." Therefore all aboriginal words indicating this fault of the human family are necessarily in their application subsequent to the settlement of the country, and had such been the origin of Manhattan, Van der

* Description of New Netherland, in Coll. N. Y. Hist. Soc., vol. i. p. 192.

Donck would surely have mentioned it.*

It must be recollected, when considering both etymologies, that neither the Delawares nor Mohegans gave the name to the island,† and when explained to Heckewelder, the term had been in use for nearly two centuries, and was, therefore, archaic and beyond their time. The Mo-

* In the various Algonquian dialects occur several descriptive terms to express drunkenness or a drunken man ; but all are undoubtedly subsequent to the settlement of the country, like other terms which grew out of new conditions and ideas.

† The Manhattans, while akin to both tribes, were geographically, as well as linguistically, intermediate between the Delawares and Mohegans.

hegan etymology must also be regarded, when compared with the early forms, as being for many reasons fully as faulty and unacceptable as the Delaware, and the fact that Mr. Anthony believed in it, to the exclusion of the "drunk" derivation of his ancestors, shows that he had either seen Heckewelder's two etymologies in print previously, or else had learned it from some Mohegan.*

* The Mohegan derivation of their own tribal name shows how little we can depend upon their interpretation of their ancient terms, and of how little worth are most of their traditions. Captain Hendrik Aupaumut, a chief of that Nation who died after 1829 (Ruttenber, Indians of the Hudson River, p. 325), said (Mass. Hist. Soc.

Judge Egbert Benson's reference to the *town of Manhattans*, the *town of the Manhatoes*, the *townsmen of Manhattans*, in his Memoir on

Coll., vol. ix. p. 101): "The etymology of the word *Muhheakunnuk*, according to the original signification, is 'great waters or sea which are constantly in motion either ebbing or flowing.' Our forefathers asserted that they were emigrants from west-by-north of another country; that they passed over great waters, where this and the other country are nearly connected, called *Ukhkokpeck;* it signifies snake water or water where snakes are abundant; and that they lived by side of a great water or sea, from whence they derive the name of *Muhheakunnuk* nation. *Muhheakunneyuk* is a plural number. As they were coming from the west they found many great waters, but none of them flowing and ebbing like *Muhheakunnuk* until they came to Hudson's River; then they

Indian and Dutch Names, read before the Historical Society of the State of New York, in 1817, can hardly be called an interpretation,

said one to another, this is like *Muhhea-kunnuk* our nativity." The late Dr. D. G. Brinton (Lenape and their Legends, p. 20) accepts this fully, and says they "dwelt on the tide water of the Hudson, and from this their name was derived. Dr. Trumbull, indeed, following Schoolcraft, thinks they took their tribal name from *Maingan*, a wolf, and *Mohganick* = Chip. *Maniganikan*, 'a country of wolves.' . . The compound is *Machaak*, 'great,' *hickan*, 'tide,' and *ik*, 'animate plural termination.'" The early maps, as well as the early forms of the name, most decidedly contradict this assertion, and fully confirm the wolf derivation beyond a shadow of question. On the Carte Figurative, of 1616, they are called *Mahicans* (= Cree, *Mahigan*, "a wolf"); and those to the eastward *Mor-*

as it is simply a quotation from some of the old documents. But his reference to a "Manhattan town," as will be noticed, hints at

hicans. The latter "were called the Pequttoog 'the destroyers,' by the Narragansetts; they were a branch of the *Mohegan* nation, which migrating eastward from the Hudson Valley had occupied the territory on both sides of Mistick River, and extended their conquests over the greater part of eastern Connecticut" (Trumbull, R. W. Key, quoted from Church's Philip's War, Ed. by Dexter). This and other authorities which might be quoted show the accepted identity of the two branches of the nation.

Champlain, on his map of 1632 (Doc. Hist. N. Y., vol. iii.), lays down the southern part of New England, extending from the Hudson to Narragansett Bay, as the *Habitation Sauvages Maniganatigouoit.* This legend really settles and explains the

another etymology, which will be quoted later on.

Henry R. Schoolcraft, in his Comments, Philological and His-

whole matter, for allowing for the French pronunciation of the northern dialects, by Champlain, it signifies, *The dwelling-place of the savages of the wolf's head family, or totem.* Otchipwe *Maingan*, "a wolf," *-tigou* (= *tigwân*), "a head," *-oit* (= *oht*, *-ote*, *-ode*), "family," "totem," or "belonging." This derivation is still later and further confirmed on Creuxius' Map of 1660 (Winsor, Cartier to Frontenac, pp. 184–5), where their country is Latinized as belonging to the *Natio Luporii*, "Nation of the Wolf," same as that belonging to the Eries is Latinized as *Natio Felium*, "Nation of the Cat." In all the early French documents they are invariably called the *Loups*, "Wolfs," where the English called them the *Mohegans*. They were probably called the *Nation of the*

torical, on the Aboriginal Names and Geographical Terminology of the State of New York, read before the New York Historical Society in 1844,* says: "The Indians called the island *Mon-a-ton, wolf*, or, *Nation of the wolf's head totem*, because they were characterized by wearing or using a wolf's head as a tribal emblem or badge. One of the *Sasquesahanoughs*, described by Captain John Smith in 1608, wore "a wolfs head hanging in a chain for a jewell," and, for aught we know to the contrary, he may have been a *Mohegan*, then on a visit to the *Sasquesahanoughs*. Schoolcraft came very near to it, when he said: "*Mohegan* was a phrase to denote an enchanted wolf, or a wolf of supernatural power. This was the badge of arms of the tribe, rather than the name of the tribe itself." (See Note on the *Black Minquas*.)

* Proc. N. Y. Hist. Soc., 1844, p. 95.

dropping the local inflection *uk*. The word is variously written by early writers, the name as pronounced to me in 1827, by *Metoxon*, a Mohegan chief, is *Mon-ah-tan-uk*, a phrase which is descriptive of the whirlpool of Hellgate. *Mon*, or *man*, as here written, is the radix of the adjective bad, carrying as it does, in its multiplied forms, the various meanings of violent, dangerous, etc.; when applied in compounds, *ah-tun* is a generic term for channel, or stream of running water; *uk* denotes locality, and also plurality. When the tribe had thus denoted this passage, which is confessedly the most striking and characteristic

geographical feature of the region, they called the island near it, to imply the anglicised term *Man-hat-tan*, and themselves *Mona-tuns*, that is to say 'people of the whirlpool,'" Schoolcraft refers to Heckewelder's "drunk" etymology as being "sheer inference, unsupported by philology." His own derivation is even worse than Heckewelder's and in no way can be sustained by the early forms of the name, no matter how pronounced by a Mohegan chief of this century.*

The Indians were so exact in their

*Here we might suppose that "Metoxon" would have given Schoolcraft the so-called *bow and arrow* derivation of his ancestors, if it were the true one.

application of a name to a place that it is perhaps needless to observe that this alone proves Schoolcraft's error. Schoolcraft had a very fair knowledge of the Chippeway dialect, but when he applied, as he frequently did, Chippeway elementary syllables to the interpretation of the Algonquian names in the East, without sufficient study of the Eastern dialects, he most miserably failed in nearly every instance.

Rev. C. H. Wheeler's Etymological Vocabulary of Modern Geographical Names, contributed to Webster's Unabridged Dictionary for 1864, and editions following, has "*Manhattan* (Ind. *Munnohatan*) 'the

town on the island.' " At one time I regarded this as one of the best etymologies so far suggested, especially as the early records, as quoted by Judge Benson, to which reference has been made, spoke of the " town of the Manhattans," etc., but an earlier form of the word lately discovered has convinced me that this etymology, as far as its terminal *atan* is concerned, is a mistake like the others.

A writer in the Historical Magazine for 1866 (vol. i. p. 89) suggests that: " the name was a generic term designating not only the occupants of the island now called Manhattan, but of Long Island, and the main-

land north of Manhattan. The term Manhattan indicates this, being apparently from *Menohhunnet*, which in Eliot's Bible is given as the equivalent of islands, or as applied to the people, 'the people of the islands.'" This meaning of the name has been frequently quoted by other writers, and while the island part is correct, the application to the neighboring country is too extended to be acceptable.

Rev. N. W. Jones, in his Indian Bulletin for 1867, translates *Manhattan* as "rapids," erroneously offering as an equivalent the Abnaki *Men'i-tan*, which is a misquotation for *Mennitañn*, "it is rapid," an inter-

pretation similar to Schoolcraft's, but from different elements.

The late J. Hammond Trumbull, in his Composition of Indian Geographical Names, 1870 (p. 22), remarks: "New York Island was sometimes spoken of as 'the island' —*Manate, Manhatte;* sometimes as 'an island'—*Manathan, Menatan, Manhattan;* more accurately as 'the small island'—*Manhaates, Manattes,* and the *Manados,* of the Dutch. The island Indians collectively were called *Manhattens;* those of the small island *Manhatesen.* 'They deeply mistake,' as Governor Stuyvesant's agents declared in 1659, 'who interpret the general name of *Man-*

hattans into the particular town built upon a little island; because it signified the whole country and province.'" This suggestion of Dr. Trumbull, and others previous to him, that the name denoted "an island" or "a little island," would seem to bring the subject to a finality; but while it is agreed that the element indicating 'an island' is embodied in the name, it is evident that something remains undiscovered and unaccounted for in its termination. The general use of the term by the Dutch, of which Dr. Trumbull gives us another quotation from the records, has already been referred to—an application, as before

remarked, having nothing whatever to do with the Indians' use of the term, or his understanding of it. In fact, if the Dutch records hint at anything, it is that the term means "a little town on an island," or "a town on a little island."

Mr. Bernard Fernow,* basing his remarks upon the so-called Carte Figurative of 1816, which may be one of the cartographical perversions of later time, suggests the origin of the Indian names thereupon from Spanish sources. He says: "That it is hard to believe they were not first applied by the

* Narrative and Critical History of America, 1884; vol. iv. p. 434.

Spaniards and afterward repeated by the Indians to the before-mentioned Dutch prisoners among the Mohawks.* We find one tribe called *Capitanasses*, while in colloquial Spanish *Capitanazo* means a great warrior; another whom the Dutch later knew as Black Minquas, is designated by the name *Gachos*, the Spanish word *Gacho* being applied to black cattle. Still another

* For certain reasons these Cartes Figuratives seem to have been drawn later than their supposed dates, and subsequent to the documents to which they were found attached. The originals seem to have been *two rough drafts* according to the Dutch legend, written on the map assigned to 1614 by Mr. Brodhead.—Col. Hist. N. Y., vol. i.

is called *Canoomakers;* 'canoe' being a word of the Indian tongue of South America, the North American Indian could only have learned it from the Spaniards, and in turn have taught its meaning to the Dutch. Even the Indian name given to the island upon which the city of New York now stands, spelled on the earliest maps *Monados, Manados, Manatoes*, and said to mean a place of drunkenness, points to a Spanish origin from the colloquially used noun *Moñas*, drunkenness, *Moñados*, drunken men." *

* Mr. Fernow follows with some more seeming correspondences (Narrative and Critical History of America, vol. iv. p. 434). He remarks: "The names of places given

This resemblance of Indian words to those of Latin tongues has been often the subject of discussion and comparison. Such accidental

in their corruption by the Dutch, in a grant covering part of Albany Co. *Semesseerse*, Spanish *semencera*, 'land sown with' seed; *Negogance*, 'place for trade,' Spanish *negocia*, 'trade.' In a note to a previous page [430] he derives the Iroquoian term *Tawalsontha*, 'a heap of dead men's bones' (?) from the French *Tas de jonchets*, having same expression, and this time assigns the two Algonquian words to the French, which is possibly a slip of the pen, although it really makes no difference. Mr. Fernow, while a learned historiographer, was completely deluded by these false resemblances, which really have no foundation. It is time they were exhibited in their true light before they are quoted further by historians and others (as they have been) who know no better.

similarities can be traced in many names of various linguistic stocks of America, but they will amount to nothing whatever in the end, because

In the first place, the above grant did not cover any part of the present Albany Co., as Mr. Fernow states, but a portion of Rensselaer Co., on the opposite side of the river. On the original grant to Killian Van Rensselaer (Col. Hist. N. Y., vol. xiv. p. 1, dated Aug. 6, 1630) it is stated, "there came by accident several Indians [named] proprietors of their respective parcel of land, to a place where Jan Jansen Meyns camped with some men *to cut timber* for the ship." This land, it further recites, "belonged to the said *Naswanemit*, in particular called *Gesmesseeck*" (=*Gesmess-es-iek*), *i. e.*, "land where trees (or timber) were cut." *Semesseerse*, as Mr. Fernow writes it, was an error of some copyist in 1672 (Col. Hist. N. Y., vol. i. p. 44), and again abbreviated as *Semesseeck* in 1675 (*Ibid.*,

they are all adventitious. For example, we might just as well claim that the likeness of the Narragansett and Long Island, *homes*, "an old man," * to the Latin, *homo*, would

vol. iii. pp. 549, 560). The grant further recites "away north to *Negagonse*," or *vice versa*, "from said fort to a little south of *Moenemines* Castle"; and as the record of 1674 states, "Whereabouts the aforesaid Fort Orange was formerly built." Did this refer to an old Fort Orange? The term *neg-agon-se* refers to something "old or ancient, first in order, passed by," Mass. *Neg-agon-es-et* "to the old (thing)." Compare Abnaki *negañnsak* ∞, "*bois vieux, mort*"; *Negañnié* "*chose ancienne*"; Micmiac *nkânegâñ*, "an old house." Not an element in either name to indicate "planting," "sowing," or "trading," but something else decidedly more interesting in throwing light on the early days.

*This name *Homes*, "an old man" (R.

indicate the ancient Romans as the first visitors to our continent; or that it might have been a survival or a reminder of Verazzano's Voyage of 1624.

The names to which Mr. Fernow refers can, probably, all be identified, and it will not be necessary to search a Spanish dictionary for them. Van der Donck informs us that the *Black Minquas* were not so called

Williams' Key, chap. v.) now designates two localities: *Holmes'* Hill, at North Sea, Southampton, L. I. ("*Homes'* hill," 1691 and 1703), and *Holmes'* Hole, Martha's Vineyard, Mass. Gov. Mayhew wrote (Deed, 1642): "as far as the easternmost chop of *Homses'* Hole." A record of 1681 "*Ponit* an Indian Sachem of *Nobnocket* alias *holmes* his hole."

on account of their color, but because they wore a black badge on their breast.* The word *canoe* had been adopted into the English language, and was in common use long anterior to the supposed date of the Carte Figurative. Hariot made use of it in 1585,† as did also Captain John Smith in 1608.‡ The word *Canoomakers*, as displayed on the Chart, seems to bespeak an English

* He says (Coll. N. Y. Hist. Soc., N. S., vol. i. p. 209): "The beavers are mostly taken far inland, there being very few of them near the settlement, particularly by the *Black Minquas*, who are thus named because they wear a black badge on their breast, and not because they are really black."

† Narrative, etc., p. 34.

‡ Arber's Smith, p. 14.

origin, rather than either Spanish or Dutch. Finally, it is decidedly absurd to suppose that the Indians of Hudson River, at that early date, or indeed, at any time, were so conversant with words of Spanish derivation as to have repeated them to the Dutch or English, in order to describe tribes or people more remote. In fact, this Spanish origin is fully as bad as the English pun derivation of *Man-with-a-hat-on*, which is occasionally quoted in the newspapers, with a traditional story to give it some credence.

Mr. E. M. Ruttenber, in a recent work * rejects his former belief †

* Memorial Hist. N. Y., vol. i. p. 35.

† Indian Tribes of the Hudson, pp. 77, 36.

in the derivation given in the Historical Magazine, before quoted, and remarks: "Notwithstanding the stern logic of facts, it is not an agreeable task to divest Manhattan Island of other claims to that title than that of adoption; to break the glamour which enshrouds the Manhattans, or destroy the fine interpretations which have been given to their presumed name; yet it cannot longer be received as an historical fact that the name Manhattan is from or after a tribe of savages, among whom the Dutch made their first settlement,nor can the interpretation be accepted that the name was from *Menohhannet*, in Mohecan the equivalent of

Islands, or as defining 'the people of the islands,' for both are incorrect. The *Manna-hata* of Hudson did not refer to the east side of the river, nor to a people, but was and is a compound Algonquin descriptive term, than which there is none more pure, none more comprehensive, and none more appropriate to the object described. Divested of its coalescents it presents *ma*, as in *Manitto*, the Great Spirit, or, in a modified sense, any object that is noble, or that may command reverence; *na*, excellence, abundance, something surpassing; *ata* or *ta*, a beautiful scene, valley, or landscape, or, omitting the final *a*, '*at*,' 'an

object near by.' The significance of these root terms cannot be escaped."

If these so-called "root terms," were correct and of universal application they would apply in other names of places; but the truth is, the use of such a method of procedure and analysis to other combinations would meet with disaster and bring confusion on the comparative method of studying Algonquian nomenclature.

The incorporation of three elementary syllables of analogous meaning is enough in itself to cast a decided doubt upon this interpretation, for the reason that Algonquian place-names are not formed

in that way. Again, *ma* is not the radical of *Manitto*, as our best scholars, such as Trumbull,* Brin-

* Trumbull, in his Algonkin Verb, remarks: "*Manit, i. e.*, the Preternatural, often translated as 'God,' 'spirit,' and the like, is regularly formed as the suppositive (3d pers. sing.) and participial of a primary verb meaning 'to surpass, exceed, be more than.' The verbal root *an*, 'surpassing, going beyond,' is the base of Mass. *anui* (*anue*, El.), 'it surpasses, is more than'; Del. *alui* (*eluwi*, 'most,' Zeisb.), West; Cree *a'in* (ᓀ *ayew*, 'more, surpassing' etc.; Lac.); Chip. *ani-* (in composition marks 'going on,' Baraga). Eliot employs *anue* to form the comparative degree, as in Matt. xviii. 8, 9, *anue wunnegen*, 'it is better.' It takes personal form in Mass. *an-in*, 'it is rotten, decayed,' *i. e.*, 'goes beyond, is more than ripe, mature, or fit for use'; and with *anin*, subj. *aninnu*, 'he is corrupt, rotten' (John xi. 39; Ps. xiv. 1); inan. ptcpl. *ne aneuk*, 'that which is corrupt' (Mal. i. 14; Ps. xii. 4); anim. *noh anit*, 'he who ex-

ton, * Chamberlain † and Gatschet ‡

ceeds, surpasses, is more than'—the natural, common, or normal. With the indefinite and impersonal pronominal prefix *-manit*, somebody or something that exceeds, is preternatural. With the predicative affix *Manit,-u* (*Manitto*, *Manittoo*, El.), he or it is *manit; nen manitto*, 'I am God' (Is. xliii. 12). 'They cry out *Manittóo*, that is, it is a God,' says Roger Williams, at the apprehension of any excellency in man, woman, bird, etc.; and so they say of everything which they cannot comprehend. In composition the impersonal prefix *m* is not retained; *e. g.*, Del. *Get-annito* (Zeisb.) = Mass. *kehtannit*, 'the greatest god' (for the Lord God, Gen. xxiv. 7)."

* Lenapé and their Legends, p. 219. Brinton believed the *an* of *mannit* to be a intensive prefix to the real root *it*, thus disagreeing with Trumbull, but he is evidently mistaken and Trumbull's derivation far preferable.

† American Notes and Queries. Philadelphia, 1888, vol. i. pp. 305, 6.

‡ Journal American Folk Lore, vol. xii. pp. 211, 212.

have repeatedly shown, neither does the radical of *Manitto* enter into the composition of *Manhattan*, as I shall presently demonstrate. Mr. Ruttenber, following Hudson, locates *Manhattan* on the Jersey side of the river, and says in a note that De Vries confirms Hudson's location of the name, which is a decided mistake, for he does nothing of the kind. Relating his return voyage from a visit to Hartford in 1639, De Vries writes:* "Arriving about evening at the *Manhattes*, opposite Fort Amsterdam." As the critical reader cannot help but

* Coll. N. Y. Hist. Soc., N. S. vol. i. p. 261.

observe, this statement in no way confirms Hudson, for it evidently means that De Vries, arrived at the *Manhattes*, and dropped anchor opposite Fort Amsterdam, which was on Manhattan Island. Nothing else can be made of the statement, and it corresponds with other remarks of De Vries. De Laet, however, who wrote ten years previously says:* "On the right or eastern bank of the river from its mouth dwell the *Manhattae*, or *Manatthanes*, a fierce nation and hostile to our people from whom nevertheless they purchased the island . . .

*Coll. N. Y. Hist. Soc., N. S., vol. i. p. 308.

opposite the Manhattans dwell the *Machkentiwomi.*"

Rev. B. F. Da Costa, who contributes the first chapter to the same history, in a very scholarly and critical discussion of the early maps, refutes unknowingly many of the deductions given by Mr. Ruttenber in the second.

In the foregoing *résumé* the various significations and derivations offered for the name Manhattan have been quoted and criticised; they reveal what a chaos of uncertainty and doubt the subject still remains. The question will now be treated from another standpoint, bringing to bear upon it the light

afforded by some recent discoveries, without which this essay would never have been written. There can be no question as to the fact, and abundant proof can be adduced from the records of both the Dutch and English, to corroborate the same, that the name in the beginning was bestowed upon the island still bearing it.* Again, there can be no doubt whatever, as is evidenced by all the early writers and confirmed by all the early documents, that the name is of aborigi-

*A record of 1626 states (Coll. Hist. N. Y., vol. i. p. 37): "They have purchased the Island *Manhattes* from the Indians for the value of 60 guilders [$24.00]; 'tis 11,000 Morgens in size."

nal origin, no matter how spelled or pronounced by alien tongues. The Dutch, French, and English all had their own way of spelling it and hardly twice alike. For example, Earl Bellomont, * wrote in 1700: "*Menades*, is the French name for this Island of New York, taken I suppose, from the Indian name of *Manhattan*." The Dutch abbreviated it as much as possible for ease of utterance. The Cartes Figuratives of 1614 and 1616† are supposed to have been the earliest maps on which the name appears; but both of these maps may have

* Coll. Hist. N. Y., vol. iv. p. 793.
† Coll. Hist. N. Y., vol. i.

been delineated from information obtained subsequent to their supposed dates. This, however, is a topic worthy of more extensive treatment than is warranted at this time, and it may be made the subject of future investigation.* There is, however, an earlier map, recently discovered in the General Archives of Simancas, Spain,† of unique value, which was prepared from English sources for James I. A copy found its way to Philip III. of Spain, by Velasco, March 22, 1612. Rev. Dr. B. F. Da Costa, who discusses this map at some

* See note p. 44.

† Genesis of the U. S., Brown, p. 456.

length, and whose opinion is worth quoting, says:* "It was a copy of a map made soon after the voyage to New England and Virginia, in 1607. The compiler had not heard of Hudson's voyage, as that navigator did not reach England until November 7, 1609. If he had received any information from Hudson, he would have shown the river terminating in a shallow innavigable brook, whereas, the river is indicated, in accordance with Captain John Smith's idea, as a strait leading to a larger body of water. Further the map contradicts Hudson, who represents the

* Memorial Hist. of N. Y., vol. i. p. 30.

Hoboken side of the river as *Mannahata*, while this map puts the name on both sides, *Manahata* on the west,* and *Manahatin* on the east. It is not unlikely that Hudson had with him a copy of the map for his guidance on the voyage in the *Half Moon.* † On the origi-

*The Map of 1632 (Doc. Hist. N. Y., vol. i.) has the legend on the Jersey side, "Opposite the island *Manhatas*." Perhaps the same idea was intended to be conveyed in this case by placing the name on both sides.

† It is my belief that it is not only likely, but an undoubted fact, that Hudson had a copy of this map with him, on this memorable voyage, for a contemporary stated that Hudson had letters and maps from Captain John Smith. If not why should his mate Robert Juet, in his daily Journal of the voyage (Coll. N. Y. Hist.

nal map, of which Velasco's example was a copy, the land west of the river was colored blue, and the legend says that it is described by information drawn from the Indians. At all events, we have in this Eng-

Soc., N. S., vol. i. p. 331), have been so explicit and particular as to use the identical spelling as it occurs on the map, where he speaks of the "cliff that looked of the color of white green, as though it were either a copper or silver mine . . . it is on that side of the river that is called *Mannahata*," unless he had a copy of the chart before him. This is surely the strongest kind of circumstantial evidence, for in the Journal, and on the Map, occur the only instances of this spelling and application of the term to the west side of the river. The contemporaneous proof is as follows (Arber's Smith, p. cxiv.): "After he discovered Chesapeake Bay, Smith evidently, sent to Hudson, with the third

lish map, the first seventeenth-century delineation of the region, and one showing that the English knew the form and general character of the country which the Crown conveyed to the colonists of the

return of Captain Newport, about November 1608, a duplicate of the 'Mappe of the Bay and Rivers,' which he then sent to the Council in London. Newport reached London in January 1609; soon after which Hudson went to Holland from whence he set sail on his Third Voyage on March 25, 1609. Emmanuel Van Meteren, in his *Historie der Neder Lanscher*, states: 'This idea had been suggested to Hudson by some letters and maps which his friend Captain Smith, had sent him from Virginia; and by which he informed him that there was a sea leading to the Western Ocean by the north of the southern English Colony.' Fol. 629, Ed. 1614; and at fol. 674, of the French edition of 1618."

North and South Virginia in 1606. So far as known, it was clearly the English who first became acquainted with the name that the aborigines applied to the island upon which our great metropolitan city stands. Whether or not this was an aboriginal word or a corruption of a Castilian term, future investigators may decide." As Dr. Da Costa further observes, "the English map with its *Manahatin* furnishes the earliest form that most resembles the present."

The undeniable fact now presents itself that *Manahatin* is not only the most ancient form of the name so far discovered, but also a com-

pound term, representing the true elementary constituents as uttered by the Indians far better than does any other notation; and from which it is much easier to study its derivation and to trace its subsequent changes.

Heckewelder, Trumbull and others, as has been noticed, all recognized the first element *Manah*, as the equivalent for "island." This derivation cannot and must not be set aside, for it is abundantly paralleled in the Massachusetts *Munnah*, or *Menoh;* Abnaki *Menah;* Delaware *Mena*, and in other Algonquian names of islands, to which the same stem is affixed. It is also confirmed

by its primary and subsequent application to the island, likewise by all the early forms, especially those from English sources, such as *Manahatin*, *Munahaddons*, *Munhattoes*, etc., and it should be accepted fully as the unquestioned meaning of the first two syllables.

There still remains for our more critical consideration the termination in *-atin*, *-atan*, *-ato*, or *-ado*, with or without the superfluous Dutch or English plural in *s*, which we find so often added, when appearing in compound words, for it is never used alone; the inseparable generic denoting a hill or a mountain, is *-atin*, *-adin*, or *-attan*, and, as more or

less varied or abbreviated, is in fre quent use in all Algonquian dialects. Father Cuoq, a missionary among the Nipissings in Canada, in his prefatory remarks on Algonquian grammatical composition,* says: "Proper finals and suffixes, as in *-atin*, mountain." He further says,† "*-atin*, which is more used than *adjiw* (= Mass. *-adchu*), another suffix of same meaning. *-Atin*, 'declivity, side, little hill.'"‡ The same radical presents itself in the Delaware *Kittatinny*, "the great hills" of Pennsylvania, and in the Abnaki *Katahdin*, the great mountain of Maine. On Long

* Lexique de la Algonquine.
† *Ibid.*, p. 15. ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

Island, in the dialect of the *Massapeags*, whose language was identical with that spoken by the Manhattans, it appears in the term *Wanasquattan*, from *Wanasqua*, a point, top, or ending, and *-attan*, hills; an analysis confirmed by a record of 1696,* in which it appears as "*Wanasquattan* on ye poynt of hilles," and paralleled by Eliot† in *Wanasquodtinnúuk*, in the top of the mountains. Other examples could be cited showing the employment of this generic, but enough has been given to show its identity with the terminal of the name Manhattan. The

* Huntington, L. I. Rec., vol. ii. p. 188.
† Micah iv. 1.

interchange of the *t* and *d* in the foregoing examples should be noticed, because it fully explains the occurrence of *d* in some of the early notations, such as *Manados*, *Manadoes*, etc. These consonantal substitutions have been noticed in the Algonquian speech of the present day, and they undoubtedly occurred as well in all the older dialects of the same family.* Therefore, with

* Dr. A. F. Chamberlain, in his Language of the Mississages, p. 12, bears out this statement in the following words: "Even where the consonantal sounds are comparatively simple a variation in the utterance of the same word by the same individual on different occasions has been frequently noticed, and certain letters fail to to be clearly distinguished from certain others."

all these corroborative facts, one dove-tailing with the other, the name should undoubtedly be translated "the island of hills," and when applied in the plural to the natives of the island, as it was frequently done, we have the "people of the island of hills."* *Manahachtanienck*, or *Mannahattanink*, the Delaware and Mohegan forms as written by Heckwelder, have the locative termination in *-ink*, denot-

*Blackwell's Island, having been also called by the Indians *Minnahanonck* (= *Munnohan-anke*), "the island place" or "on the island," precludes the possibility of a "little island" for the larger and more noted island; and besides that "the island of hills" is much more appropriate in every way.

ing "at," or "on," otherwise they are both consonous with our early form, and I can see no reason why they should not bear the same analysis and the same interpretation.

That *Manahatin*, in accordance with Algonquian custom and this analysis, was descriptive of the topography of the island at the date of its discovery and its settlement, all the early Dutch pictures of New Amsterdam bear witness.*

It is well known that the surface of the island was indented by deep valleys and quite broken by ridges of gneiss and hornblendic slate, especially in the northern part, im-

* See Doc. Hist. N. Y., vol. iv. p. 116.

mense masses of which have been removed in grading. On the west side, toward the north, the highest point was 238 feet above tide water. The south part of the island was covered by drift and bowlders, presenting conical hills, some of which were 80 feet above the present grade of the street.*

* French's Gazetteer of N. Y., p. 418.

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